

For Immediate Release  
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## **New-Style Disposal Units Working as Planned at SRS**

AIKEN, S.C. (January 23, 2013) – A new disposal unit for low-level radioactive, non-hazardous salt waste materials at the Savannah River Site (SRS) is working so well the construction of two additional and similar disposal units are under way.

The units provide safe on-site permanent disposal of decontaminated salt solution taken from salt waste inside SRS underground waste storage tanks.

The new disposal unit, called Saltstone Disposal Unit (SDU) 2, comprises two separate cells that are circular in design. Each cell will hold approximately 2.9 million gallons of non-hazardous cement grout, which is a mixture of the decontaminated salt solution with Portland, fly ash and slag cement powders. The first cell put into service is nearly full.

Dave Olson, Savannah River Remediation (SRR) President and Project Manager, said the new design has been used in industrial applications for over 20 years and has many enhanced features that will improve SRR's ability to safely and permanently dispose of the waste in its final non-hazardous waste form.

"The improved design incorporates lessons learned from the first disposal units and meets or exceeds regulatory requirements set forth in the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control permit," Olson said. "The design has been proven in other industrial applications and is proving successful for us."

The new disposal unit cells have a watertight design and a cylindrical shape, unlike the Site's current disposal unit, which have a rectangular shape. The cylindrical design reduces wall stresses found in the rectangular units. It also includes an engineered concrete and steel shell, a wall-to-floor joint design, and high-density polyethylene and Geosynthetic-clay barriers below the unit.

SDU 2 began accepting low-level, non-hazardous cement grout in one of its two cells in October 2012. Once filled, the second cell will continue accepting the cement mix.

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In the meantime, construction is continuing on two additional SDUs, SDU 3 and 5, each with two individual disposal cells. Together, these four cells will hold approximately 11.6 million gallons of the cement grout, which will provide enough disposal capacity until mid-2015.

Terrel Spears, Assistant Manager for Waste Disposition Project, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)-Savannah River Operations Office, called the implementation of SDUs another step toward safe waste disposal at SRS.

“Since 1990 when the Saltstone Disposal Facility became operational, we have learned a great deal about safe waste disposal,” Spears said. “While the current disposal unit has done a good job of allowing us to safely disposition waste, the new facility takes additional steps to further enhance the safety of the environment, workers and the public.”

SRS is owned by DOE. The SRS Liquid Waste contract is managed by SRR, a team of companies led by URS Corp. with partners Bechtel National, CH2M HILL and Babcock & Wilcox. Critical subcontractors for the contract are AREVA, Energy Solutions and URS Professional Solutions.

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